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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, give this day to our Senators hope that survives after taking into account all the challenges and setbacks that might push thinking people toward pessimism. During this season of hope, remind them that faith may put them on the road to laudable accomplishments but hope must keep them there.

May our patriotism be rooted in hope rather than in pride, so that we may not think of ourselves more highly than we should. Fill us with joy and peace so that by the power of Your Holy Spirit we may abound in hope, remembering that peace does not necessarily come through strength but strength usually comes through peace.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL of New Mexico led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, December 13, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m. this morning. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes, the majority will control the second 30 minutes.

Following morning business, we will resume consideration of S. 3637. The filing deadline for second-degree amendments to that legislation is 10:30 a.m. today.

At noon there will be up to two roll-call votes; the first on the motion to waive the Budget Act if a point of order is raised, and if the motion is successful, there will be a second roll-call vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill.

I am confident there will be additional votes this afternoon on judicial nominations. We will keep everyone advised as to the time.

THE FISCAL CLIFF

Mr. REID. Mr. President, a poll this morning in the Wall Street Journal—which indicates it was done by the Wall Street Journal and NBC News—indicates clearly where we should be headed with this fiscal cliff business. But until the Republicans realize this or are willing to do what is right, we are going nowhere.

More than three-quarters of Americans, including 61 percent of Republicans, believe it is fair to ask the top 2 percent to contribute a little more to avoid a fiscal cliff, and nearly two-thirds of those polled, including many who didn't vote for President Obama in November, say he has a mandate to reduce the deficit by raising taxes on the wealthy.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

HERB KOHL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we on the Democratic side are going to recognize that seven of our Senators are retiring, and that is unfortunate, but that is the decision they have made. As I have indicated on more than one occasion, parting is sweet sorrow. We had a celebration last week and talked about those seven Senators and it was truly a wonderful evening.

I have come to the Senate floor to talk about these individual Senators, and today I am going to talk about Senator HERB KOHL. HERB KOHL, as has happened to other Members of this body, has had to overcome adversity to become a Senator.

The history of HERB KOHL and his family touches me. He is a very humble man. He doesn't talk very much, and even though we have served together for 24 years, I was stunned last week when we had a guest rabbi, Rabbi Kohl, from Canada. Hearing the name didn't mean much to me because it is a fairly common name. But after the rabbi finished, HERB KOHL, this man of humility, stood on the floor and gave us all a little bit of his background, which we had never heard before.

Senator KOHL's cousin, Rabbi Baruch Kohl, served as guest chaplain and he offered the invocation to convene the Senate. After the benediction, HERB KOHL, the senior Senator from Wisconsin, shared the family history.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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